

# **Commentry of Ibn Taymiyyah on the book of Shaykh Abdul al-Qadir Jilani “Futuh al Gayb”**

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, and in Him we seek help. And may Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad, and his family and all of his companions.

What follows is taken from al-Ghunyah li-Talibi Tariq al-Haqq, in the chapter dealing with matters of creed, by the great Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, may Allah be pleased with him.

## **Chapter: Knowledge of the Maker, the Mighty and Majestic**

We say: As for the knowledge of the Maker, the Mighty and Majestic, by way of the Verses and evidences, in summary they are:

To know and be certain that He is Allah, One, Single, Eternal and Absolute (Samad), He begets not nor is He begotten, and there is none equal to Him, “There is nothing similar to Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” [Ash-Shura: 11]

There is none similar or equal to Him, neither any helper or assistant or supporter, nor has He any rival or adviser.

He is not a body such that He may be touched, nor a substance such that He may be sensed, nor an occurrence such that He may cease occurring, neither is He a being made up of parts or components, nor quality or limit.

And He is Allah, Who has raised the heaven and laid out the earth. He has no nature from among the various natures, nor has He an appearance from among the various appearances. He is not a darkness that looms, nor is He a light that shines. He is present with all things in His knowledge, witnessing them all without touching them.

Almighty, All-Ruling, Omnipotent, Merciful, Forgiving, Concealing [of faults], He grants honor and victory, Compassionate, Creator and Originator, First and Last, Most High and Most Near, Who alone deserves to be worshipped.

Living, never to die, Eternally Pre-existent, never to pass away, Everlasting in dominion, Eternal in power.

Self-Sufficient and never sleeping, Almighty and never harmed, Unattainable and never reached.

To Him belong the supreme Names and the greatest Favours. He has decreed that all creation will come to an end, for He said: "All upon it will pass away, and the Face of your Lord will abide, full of Glory and Majesty." [*Ar-Rahman*: 26-27]

And He is in the direction of the heights, having risen over His Throne, with full containment of the dominion, and His knowledge encompasses all things: "To Him ascend all good words, and all good deeds does He raise." [*Fatir*: 10] "He controls every affair from the heaven to the earth, then it ascends to Him in a Day whose measure is a thousand years of your reckoning." [*As-Sajdah*: 5]

He created all of the creatures and their deeds, and He pre-decreed all of their provisions and their lifespans. None may bring forward what He has delayed, and none may delay what He has brought forward. He willed all that His creatures would do, and if He had protected them from error they would never have opposed Him, and if He had willed that they all obey Him they would have obeyed Him.

He knows all that is secret and what is even more hidden; [He is] All-Knowing of what the hearts contain: "Does He not know, He Who created? And He is the Most Subtle, the All-Aware." [*Al-Mulk*: 14]

He is the Mover, He is the One Who puts things to rest. The imaginations can never conceive Him, nor can the minds conceptualise Him, and He is not to be measured in accordance with humans. Glorified is He above being likened to that which He has made, or that He should be associated with what He has invented and brought into being.

He counts all breaths, He oversees and judges every soul according to what it has earned: "He has counted them, and numbered them in total. And every one of them will come to Him on the Day of Resurrection alone." [*Maryam*: 94-95]

“So that every soul may be repaid according to what it has striven for.” [Ta Ha: 15] “So that He may repay those who did wrong according to what they did, and repay those whose did well with the best reward.” [An-Najm: 31]

[He is] Independent of His creation, Provider for His creatures, He feeds and is not fed, He provides and is not provided, He protects and is not in need of protection. All of creation is in need of Him. He did not create them to achieve any benefit nor to ward off any harm, neither for any purpose that compelled Him, nor due to any thought or idea that occurred. Rather it was purely due to His Will, as He said – and He is the Most Truthful of speakers: “The Lord of the Throne, the Most Glorious, Doer of whatever He wills.” [Al-Buruj: 15-16]

He alone is Able to create all substances, to remove all harms and calamities, to alter all substances and to change all conditions: “Every day He is engaged in an affair.” [Ar-Rahman: 29] He drives what He has decreed to what He has appointed for it.

And [one must know and believe] that He, the Exalted, is Living with Life, Knowing with Knowledge, Able with Ability, Willing with Will, Hearing with Hearing, Seeing with Sight, Comprehending with Comprehension, Speaking with Speech, Commanding with command, Forbidding with forbiddance, Informing with information.

And that He, the Exalted, is Just in His judgement and decree, Beneficent and Gracious in His gifts and blessings, Originating and Restoring, Causer of life and death, the Bringer of things into existence and being, Rewarding and Punishing, Generous and never miserly, Forbearing and never hasty, All-Aware and never forgetful, Ever-Awake and never neglectful, Ever-Watchful and never heedless.

He restricts and expands, He laughs and rejoices, He loves and He dislikes, He hates and He is pleased, He becomes angry and is displeased, He has mercy and forgives, He grants and He withholds, He has two Hands and both of His Hands are Right Hands. He said, Glorious and Exalted is He: “And the heavens shall be rolled up in His Right Hand.” [Az-Zumar: 67]

It is narrated from Nafi', from Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, that he said: “The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, recited upon the pulpit: ‘And the heavens shall be rolled up in His Right Hand,’ and he said: ‘They will be in His Right Hand; He will throw them as a boy throws a ball, then He will say: “I am the Almighty!”’” [Ibn 'Umar]

said: “Then I saw the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, shaking on the pulpit until he almost fell from it.” [Narrated in a similar wording by Muslim.]

Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them both, said: “He will grasp the earths and the heavens in their entirety, and none of their extremities will be seen outside of His Grasp.”

And [it is narrated] from Ibn ‘Amr, from the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, that he said: “Those who are just will be with Allah on the Day of Resurrection, on raised platforms of light at the Right Hand of the All-Merciful. And both of His Hands are Right Hands.” [Narrated by Muslim.]

And He created Adam, upon whom be peace, with His Hand, upon His Image. And He planted the Garden of Eden with His Hand, and He planted the Tree of Bliss with His Hand, and He inscribed the Torah with His Hand, and gave it to Moses from His Hand to his hand, and He spoke to him directly, without any intermediary or interpreter.

And the hearts of Allah’s slaves are between two Fingers of the All-Merciful, He turns them about as He wills, and fills them with whatever He wishes.

And the heavens and the earth on the Day of Resurrection will be in His Hand, as has come in the hadith. And He will place His Foot in Hell, and a part of it will move towards the other, and it will say: “Enough, enough!” And He will bring out a group of people from the Fire with His Hand, and the people of Paradise will look towards His Face and see Him, without being discomfited from seeing Him nor harmed, as has come in the hadith that He will reveal Himself to them and give them all that they wish for. [Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.]

And He said, and how Glorious He is Who said it: “For those who did good, there is the best reward, and yet more.” [Yunus: 26] It is said that the “best reward” refers to Paradise, and the words “yet more” refer to looking at His Noble Face.

He said, Exalted is He: “Faces on that Day will be radiant, looking towards their Lord.” [Al-Qiyamah: 22-23]

And His slaves will be presented before Him on the Day of Judgement and Repayment. He will Himself take charge of bringing them to account, and no-one else will take charge of that on behalf of Him.

And indeed Allah, Exalted is He, created seven heavens, one above the other, and seven earths, one below the other. And between the highest earth and the lowest heaven is a distance of five hundred years, and between each heaven is the distance of five hundred years, and the water is above the seventh heaven, and the Throne of the All-Merciful is above the water, and Allah, Exalted is He, is over the Throne, and beneath Him are veils of fire and light and darkness, and whatever else that He knows best.

And the Throne is borne up by bearers; Allah said, Mighty and Majestic is He: "Those who bear the Throne and those who are around it..." [Ghafir: 7] until the end of the Verse.

And the Throne has a limit that Allah knows, Exalted is He. Allah said, Mighty and Majestic is He: "And you will see the angels circling around the Throne." [Az-Zumar: 75]

And it is from a red ruby, and its expanse is like the expanse of the heavens and the earths. And the Footstool in relation to the Throne is like a ring thrown into a wide expanse of land. And He, the Glorious and Exalted, knows all that is in the seven heavens, and all that is between them, and all that is beneath them, and all that is in the seven earths, and all that is beneath them, and all that is between them, and all that is beneath the soil, and all that is in the depths of the seas, and the base of every hair, every tree, and every plant that grows, and where every leaf will fall and the number of all of that, and the number of grains of sand, stone and earth, the weight of the mountains, the measure of the seas, and the deeds of His slaves, their traces, their breaths, and their speech; He knows all things, nothing of that is hidden from Him at all.

And He is far-removed from His creation, and there is no place outside His knowledge. It is not allowed to describe Him as being everywhere, rather it is to be said that He is in the heaven over the Throne, as He said, glorious is His praise: "The All-Merciful rose over the Throne." [Ta Ha: 5] And He said: "Then He, the All-Merciful, rose over the Throne." [Al-Furqan: 59] And He said, Exalted is He: "To Him ascend all good words, and all good deeds does He raise." [Fatir: 10]

And the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, judged the correctness of the Islam of the slave girl when he said to her: "Where is Allah?" and she pointed towards the heaven. [Narrated by Muslim.]

And the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said in the hadith of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him: "When Allah created the creation, He inscribed a book and made it binding upon Himself, and it is with Him above the Throne: 'Verily, My mercy overcomes My wrath.'" [Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim.]

And according to another wording: "When Allah, Glorified is He, completed the creation, He inscribed and made binding upon Himself, in a book which is with Him above the Throne: 'Verily, My mercy has overtaken My wrath.'"

The attribute of Rising (al-istiwa') must be taken as it is, without interpretation, and that it is the Rising of the Essence over the Throne, not with the meaning of "sitting and touching" as said by the Mujassimah and Karramiyyah, nor with the meaning of "highness and loftiness" as said by the Ash'ariyyah, nor with the meaning of "overcoming and conquering" as said by the Mu'tazilah, because the Sacred Law has not mentioned any of that, nor has it been transmitted from any of the Companions or the Followers from the Righteous Predecessors from the People of the Hadith. Rather, what is transmitted from them is that they took it as it is.

It is narrated from Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, in regard to the Saying of Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He: "The All-Merciful rose over the Throne," that she said: "The 'how' of it cannot be understood, the Rising itself is not unknown, affirming it is obligatory, and denying it is unbelief." Muslim b. al-Hajjaj narrated it from her, from the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, in his Sahih.\* The like of it has also been mentioned in the hadith of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him.

[\*Editor's note: The above-mentioned hadith of Umm Salamah is not narrated in Sahih Muslim, and it does not have a reliable chain of narration, whether mawquf or marfu'. Al-Lalika'i narrated it in Sharh Usul al-I'tiqad 3/397 from Umm Salamah as a mawquf narration, and it is inauthentic. See al-Fatawa of Shaykh al-Islam 5/365.

However, a similar statement to the one in the hadith of Umm Salamah is authentically attributed to Imam Malik b. Anas, may Allah have mercy on him.]

Ahmad b. Hanbal, may Allah have mercy on him, said shortly before his death: "The narrations of the Attributes are taken as they have come, without likening them [to the creation] or negation."

He also said, as some have narrated: “I am not a person of theological discussion (kalam), and I do not view that theological discussion should be engaged in. There is only that which is in the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, or a hadith from the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, or from his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, or the Followers. As for other than that, then discussing it is not praiseworthy. For it is not to be said regarding the Attributes of the Lord, Mighty and Majestic is He, “how?” and no-one but a doubter would say that.”

And Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, said as has been narrated from him in another place: “We believe that Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, is over the Throne however He wills, and in the manner that He wills, without defining or describing this in any way that one could describe or define, due to what has been narrated from Sa’id b. al-Musayyib from Ka’b al-Ahbar that he said: ‘Allah, Exalted is He, said in the Torah: “I am Allah, over and above my slaves, and My Throne is above My entire creation, and I am over My Throne, from over it do I administer the affairs of My slaves, and nothing from my slaves is hidden from Me.”’”

And the fact that He, the Mighty and Majestic, is over His Throne is mentioned in every Book that was sent down to every Prophet that was sent, without describing “how”. And because Allah, Exalted is He, has eternally been described with Exaltedness and Power, and control and domination over all of His creation, including the Throne and everything else, then the Rising is not to be interpreted as referring to that.

So Rising is from among the Attributes of the Essence, since He has informed us of that and mentioned it clearly and emphasised it in seven Verses of His Book, and it is also in the transmitted Sunnah. It is an Attribute that is intrinsic to Him and befitting Him, like the Hand, the Face, the Eye, Hearing, Sight, Life, Power, and His being the Creator, Provider, Causer of life and death, [He is] described with all of that.

And we do not depart from the Book and the Sunnah; we read the Verse and the report, and we believe in what they contain, and we consign the “howness” in regard to the Attributes to the knowledge of Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, as Sufyan b. ‘Uyaynah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “All that Allah, Exalted is He, has described for Himself in His Book, its explanation is in its recitation, and there is no further explanation for it than that.” And we are

not obliged with more than that, for it is a matter of the unseen which is beyond the ability of the intellect to grasp.

And we ask Allah, the Exalted, to pardon us and keep us safe, and we seek His refuge from saying in regard to Him and His Attributes that of which neither He nor His Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, have informed us.

And [one must know and believe] that He, Exalted is He, descends every night to the nearest heaven, however He wills and in the manner that He wills, and forgives whoever He wills and chooses from His slaves who have sinned, erred, committed crimes and disobeyed. Blessed and Exalted is He, the Lofty, the Most High. There is no god but He, to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. [His Descent] is not with the meaning of the descent of His mercy and reward, as claimed by the Mu'tazilah and the Ash'ariyyah, due to what was narrated by 'Ubadah b. as-Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said: 'Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, descends every night to the nearest heaven, during the last third of the night, and says: "Is there anyone asking of Me, that I may grant his request? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness, that I may forgive him? Is there anyone held captive, that he may be released from his captivity?" until the dawn breaks, then our Lord, Blessed and Exalted is He, rises over His Footstool.'" [Narrated by at-Tabarani, and there is a break in its chain of narration.]

And in another wording from 'Ubadah b. as-Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, from the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, that he said: "Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, descends every night to the nearest heaven when one third of the night remains, and He says: 'Is there not one from among My slaves who will call upon Me, that I may respond to him? Is there not one who has wronged himself who will call upon Me, that I may forgive him? Is there not one whose provision is lacking who will call upon Me, that I may provide for him? Is there not an oppressed person who will make mention of Me, that I may help him? Is there not one held captive who will call upon Me, that I may free him?'" He said: "He continues like this until the break of dawn, then He rises over His Footstool." [Narrated by at-Tabarani, and there is a break in its chain of narration also.]

This hadith has been narrated in various wordings from Abu Hurayrah, Jabir b. 'Abdillah, 'Ali, 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud, Abu'd-Darda', Ibn 'Abbas and 'A'ishah, may Allah be pleased with all of them, from the Messenger of Allah, may

Allah's blessings and peace be upon him. For this reason, they used to prefer praying in the last part of the night rather than the first.

And Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated from the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, that he said: "Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, descends on the night of the middle of Sha'ban to the nearest heaven, and He forgives every soul except the person in whose heart there is hatred or the association of a partner with Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He." [Narrated by al-'Uqayli, al-Baghawi and Ibn al-Jawzi, and it is a weak hadith.]

And it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: "I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, saying: 'Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, when half of the night has passed, descends to the nearest heaven and says: "Is there anyone seeking forgiveness that I may forgive him? Is there anyone asking that I may grant him? Is there any repentant one that I may accept his repentance?" until the dawn breaks.'" [Narrated by al-Bukhari.]

And it was said to Ishaq b. Rahawayh: "What are these ahadith that you narrate, that Allah, Exalted is He, descends to the nearest heaven? Does Allah ascend and move from one place to another?" He said to the questioner: "Would you say that Allah is capable of descending and ascending without moving from one place to another?" He said: "Yes." [Ishaq] said: "So why do you object to it?"

And Yahya b. Ma'in said: "When the Jahmi says to you: 'How does He descend?', then say to him: 'How did He ascend?'" And al-Fudhayl b. 'Iyadh, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "When the Jahmi says to you: 'I do not believe in a Lord Who descends,' then say to him: 'I believe in a Lord Who does whatever He wills.'"

It is narrated from Shurayk b. 'Abdillah, may Allah have mercy on him, that it was said to him: "We have among us a group of people who object to these ahadith regarding the Attributes, and that Allah descends to the nearest heaven." So he said: "Those who brought us these ahadith are the same ones who brought us all of the Traditions from the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him: the prayer, fasting, charity and Hajj. And we only came to know about Allah by way of these ahadith."

Section:

And we believe that the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah, His Book, His Address and His Revelation that Gabriel brought down upon the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, as Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, has said: "The Faithful Spirit brought it down upon your heart, that you may be from among the Warners, in a clear Arabic tongue." [Ash-Shu'ara': 193-195] It is that which the Messenger of Allah, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, conveyed to his Ummah, in compliance with the order of the Lord of the worlds in His Saying, Exalted is He: "O Messenger, convey that which has been sent down to you from your Lord." [Al-Ma'idah: 67]

And it is narrated from Jabir b. 'Abdillah, may Allah be pleased with them both, that he said: "The Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, would present himself to the people at the place of standing, and say to them: 'Is there any man who will take me with him to his people? For Quraysh have restricted me from conveying the Word of my Lord.'" [Narrated by Ahmad.] And He said, Mighty and Majestic is He: "And if one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then give him your protection so that he may hear the Word of Allah." [At-Tawbah: 6] And the Word of Allah, Exalted is He, is the Qur'an, it is uncreated in whatever manner it is read, recited or inscribed, and in whatever manner a person recites it, pronounces it, or memorises it. It is the Speech of Allah, and an Attribute from among the Attributes of His Essence, it is not brought into being, nor altered, nor changed, nor assembled together, nor is anything decreased from it, nor is it made, nor can it be added to. Its sending down originated from Him, and its rule (hukm) goes back to Him.

It is as the Prophet, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him, said in the hadith of 'Uthman b. 'Affan, may Allah be pleased with him: "The excellence of the Qur'an over all other speech is like the excellence of Allah over the rest of His creation." [Narrated by at-Tirmidhi, ad-Darimi and others, and it is a weak hadith.]

That is because the Qur'an originated from Him, Blessed and Exalted is He, and will return to Him. The meaning of this is that its sending down and its beginning and manifestation is from Him, Mighty and Majestic is He, and its rule goes back to Him, meaning the acts of worship, obedience to His commands and avoidance of His prohibitions, all of which is done for His sake, therefore the rules go back to Him, Mighty and Majestic is He.

And it is said: It originated from Him as His rule, and it goes back to Him by His knowledge.

And it is the Speech of Allah, whether in the hearts of the memorisers, the tongues of the speakers, the hands of the writers, the sight of those who look at it, the written copies (masahif) of the people of al-Islam, and the tablets read by children, in whatsoever manner it is seen or found.

So whoever claims that it is created, or that it is the representation [of the Speech of Allah], or that “the recitation is other than that which is recited”, or who says: “My pronunciation of the Qur’an is created”, then he is an unbeliever in Allah the Almighty. It is not allowed to sit with him, to eat with him, to be marry a Muslim woman to him, or to keep company with him. Rather, he must be boycotted and humiliated. He is not to be prayed behind, nor is his testimony accepted, nor is his guardianship valid in regard to the marriage of his ward, nor is he to be prayed upon when he dies. If he is caught, then he is to be given three days to repent as in the case of the apostate, and if he does not repent, then he is to be executed.

Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked about the one who says: “My pronunciation of the Qur’an is created.” He said: “He has disbelieved.”

And he said, may Allah be pleased with him, regarding one who says: “The Qur’an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated, but the recitation of it is created”, or: “our pronunciation of the Qur’an is created”, that he is an unbeliever.

And it is narrated from Abu’d-Darda’, may Allah be pleased with him, that he asked the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, about the Qur’an, and he said: “The Speech of Allah, uncreated.”\* And it is narrated from ‘Abdullah b. ‘Abd al-Ghaffar, and he was a freed slave of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, from the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, that he said: “When the Qur’an is mentioned, then say: ‘The Speech of Allah, uncreated.’ Whoever says that it is created, then he is an unbeliever.”

[\*Editor’s note: A fabricated hadith. There is no authentic hadith narrated with such a meaning. See al-Mawdu’at by Ibn al-Jawzi 1/108-109, al-La’ali al-Masnu’ah 1/4, Tanzih ash-Shari’ah 1/134-135, and al-Asrar p.257. As-Sakhawi said in al-Maqasid: “This hadith is false in all of its paths of transmission.” The second hadith mentioned above is likewise fabricated.]

Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, said: “Indeed, His is the creation and the command.” [Al-A’raf: 54] So He has distinguished between the creation and the command. Therefore, if His command, that is, the word “Be” by which He created the creation, is itself created, then it would be a pointless repetition and fault, as if He were in fact saying: “Indeed, His is the creation and the creation.” Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, is highly Exalted above that!

And it is narrated from Ibn Mas’ud and Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, that they both interpreted His Saying, Mighty and Majestic is He: “An Arabic Qur’an, without any crookedness” [Az-Zumar: 28] as meaning uncreated.

And Allah, Exalted is He, threatened al-Walid b. al-Mughirah al-Makhzumi with Hellfire when he called the Qur’an the speech of a mortal, saying: “‘This is nothing but sorcery that has been received, this is nothing but the speech of a mortal.’ I will burn him in Hellfire.” [Al-Muddaththir: 24-26]

So anyone who says that the Qur’an is a representation or a creation, or “my pronunciation of the Qur’an is created”, then for him will be Hellfire, as it was for al-Walid, unless he repents.

And He said, Exalted is He: “And if one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then give him your protection so that he may hear the Word of Allah.” [At-Tawbah: 6] And He did not say: “So that he may hear your speech, O Muhammad.”

And He said, Exalted is He: “Verily, We sent it down in the Night of Power.” [Al-Qadr: 1] Meaning, the Qur’an which is within the hearts and the written copies (masahif).

And He said, Mighty and Majestic is He: “And when the Qur’an is recited, then listen to it and hearken to it in silence, that you may receive mercy.” [Al-A’raf: 204] And He said, Exalted is He: “And a Qur’an which We have made into parts, that you may recite it to the people at intervals.” [Al-Isra’: 106] And the people heard only the recitation and pronunciation of the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, therefore his own pronunciation of the Qur’an is the Qur’an itself.

And Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, praised the jinn who heard the recitation of the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him: “And they said: ‘Verily, we have heard a wonderful Qur’an, guiding to what is right,

so we have believed in it, and never will we associate with our Lord any partner.” [Al-Jinn: 1-2] And He said, Exalted is He: “And when We sent towards you a group of the jinn, listening to the Qur’an.” [Al-Ahqaf: 29]

And Allah named the recitation of Gabriel, upon whom be peace, of the Qur’an as a “Qur’an”. For he said, Glorious and Exalted is He: “Move not your tongue therewith in order to complete it in haste. Verily, its gathering and recitation is upon Us, so when We have recited it, then follow its recitation.” [Al-Qiyamah: 16-18] And he said, Exalted is He: “So recite what is easy for you of the Qur’an.” [Al-Muzzammil: 20]

And there is a consensus among all of the Muslims that the one who has recited the Fatihah in a prayer has recited the Book of Allah, and that the one who made an oath not to speak and then recited the Qur’an is not considered to be in violation of his oath. So this proves that [the Qur’an] is not a mere representation [of Allah’s Speech].

And the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said in the hadith of Mu’awiyah b. al-Hakam, may Allah be pleased with him: “In this prayer of ours, the speech of humans is unbefitting; it is only recitation, glorification and praise of Allah, and reciting the Qur’an.” [Narrated by Muslim.] So he informed us that the recitation of the Qur’an is the Qur’an itself, and it is thereby made known that the recitation is the very thing that is recited. And Allah, Exalted is He, and His Messenger, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, have both ordered the believers to recite the Qur’an in the prayer, and they have forbidden speaking. Therefore, if our recitation was our own speech rather than the Speech of Allah, then we would all be in violation of the prohibition [of speaking] in the prayer.

#### Section:

And we believe that the Qur’an is comprised of letters that are understood, and sounds that are audible. Because it is with these that one who is mute or silent becomes speaking and verbalising. And Allah’s Speech, Mighty and Majestic is He, is not exempted from that. So whoever rejects “that Book” [cf. al-Baqarah: 2], then he has stubbornly denied his own senses and his insight has been blinded.

Allah has said, Mighty and Majestic is He: “Alif Lam Mim. That is the Book.” [Al-Baqarah: 1-2] “Ha Mim.” [Ghafir: 1] “Ta Sin Mim. Those are the Verses of the Book.” [Al-Qasas: 1-2] So He has mentioned certain letters, and has

referred to them as the Book. And He said, Exalted is He: “And if all the trees on earth were pens, and the sea were ink with seven more seas behind it, the Words of Allah would never be exhausted.” [Luqman: 27] So He affirmed for Himself an endless amount of Words. Likewise is His Saying: “Say: If the sea were ink for the Words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord became exhausted, even if We brought the like of it again.” [Al-Kahf: 109]

And the Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said: “Recite the Qur’an, for you will be rewarded for it with every letter ten good deeds. Indeed, I do not say that ‘Alif Lam Meem’ is a letter; rather ‘Alif’ is ten, ‘Lam’ is ten, ‘Mim’ is ten, therefore the total is thirty.” [Narrated by at-Tirmidhi.]

And the Prophet, may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, said: “The Qur’an was sent down according to seven dialects, all of them are sufficient.” [Narrated by an-Nasa’i and Abu Dawud.]

And He said, Exalted is He, regarding Moses, upon whom be peace: “And when your Lord called to Moses.” [Ash-Shu’ara’: 10] “And We called to him from the right side of the mountain, and brought him near to speak to him.” [Maryam: 52] And He said, Exalted is He, to Moses, upon whom be peace: “Verily, I am Allah, no god is there but Me, so worship Me.” [Ta Ha: 14] All of this cannot refer to anything other than an audible Voice, and it is not possible that this Call, this Name, and this Attribute could belong to any other than Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, not one of the angels or any other creature.

It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: “The Prophet, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, said: ‘On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will come, Mighty and Majestic is He, in the shades of the clouds, and He will speak with perfect and fluent Speech, saying – and He is the Most Truthful of speakers: “Hearken to Me, for long have I hearkened to you! From the time that I created you, I have seen your deeds and heard your words. These are but your own records that are read out before you. So whoever finds good, then let him praise Allah, and whoever finds other than that, let him blame none but himself.” [Narrated by at-Tabarani and al-Hakim, and it is a weak hadith.]

And al-Bukhari narrated in his Sahih with his chain of narration from ‘Abdullah b. Unays, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said: “I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him, saying: ‘Allah, Glorified is He, will gather together His slaves, and He will call them

with a Voice that will be heard equally by those who are far-off as it will be heard by those who are near: “I am the King, I am the Judge.”\*

[\*Editor’s note: It is in fact narrated by al-Bukhari in his Sahih as a mu’allaq narration without the chain of narration. Al-Bukhari narrated it with the chain of narration in Khalq Af’al al-‘Ibad (p.365), as did Ahmad (3/495), and its chain of narration is weak.]

And ‘Abd ar-Rahman b. Muhammad al-Muharibi narrated from al-A’mash, from Muslim, from Masruq, from ‘Abdullah [b. Mas’ud], may Allah be pleased with him: “When Allah speaks the revelation, the inhabitants of the heaven hear His Voice, so they fall in prostration, until when the fear has left their hearts, the inhabitants of the heaven call to each other: ‘What has your Lord said?’ They say: ‘The Truth. He said...’ then they mention the revelation.” [Narrated by Abu Dawud.]

And from ‘Abdullah b. al-Harith, from Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that he said: “When Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, speaks the revelation, the inhabitants of the heavens hear a Voice like the sound of iron falling onto a stone, so they fall in prostration to Him, then when the fear has left their hearts they say: ‘What has your Lord said?’ They say: ‘The Truth, and He is the Most High, the Most Great.’” [Mentioned by as-Suyuti in ad-Durr al-Manthur, and he attributed it to Ibn Abi Hatim, ‘Abd b. Humayd, Ibn al-Mundhir, and Ibn Mardawayh.]

As His knowledge, His power, and all the rest of His Attributes do not bear any likeness to the attributes of mankind, so likewise in regard to His Voice. Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, has clearly stated the affirmation of the Voice in the narration of a large group of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, in contrast to what the Ash’ariyyah say that Allah’s Speech is a meaning that is present inside Himself. Allah will call to account every misguided, misguiding innovator! For Allah, Glorified is He, has always been speaking, and His Speech encompasses all meanings of commanding, prohibiting and informing.

And Ibn Khuzaymah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: “The Speech of Allah, Exalted is He, is continuous, without pause or voice.” And it was said to Ahmad b. Hanbal, may Allah have mercy on him: “Is it allowed for us to say that Allah, Exalted is He, speaks? And that it is possible for Him to pause in His Speech?” So he said, may Allah have mercy on him: “We say in general that Allah, Exalted is He, has always been speaking. If there were narrated a

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report attributing pausing to Him, we would say according to that. But what we do say is that He speaks however He wills, without asking “how?” or likening [Him to His creation].”